

Remarks

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. Claim 1, 4-11, 12-17 and 20-37 are pending. Claims 2, 3, 12, and 18-20 have been cancelled.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has acknowledged that claims 25-37 are allowed. Additionally, the examiner had indicated that claims 3,4,12-16, and 20-24 are directed to allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations in the base claim from which they depend and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the indication of allowability.

35 U.S.C. §102 Claim Rejections

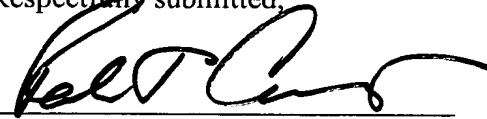
Claims 1-2, 5-6, and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,938,776 to Sicola et al. Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 (which the Examiner has indicated is allowable), thus rendering this rejection moot. Claim 11 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 12 (which the Examiner has indicated is allowable), thus rendering this rejection moot.

Claims 17-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,956,665 to Martinez et al. Claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 18, 19 and 20 (which the Examiner has indicated is allowable), thus rendering this rejection moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and issuance of the pending claims. If any issues remain that preclude issuance of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert E. Cannuscio', written over a horizontal line.

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